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Letter dated 17 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose, in my capacity as Chair of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Group at New York, a statement on behalf of the Organization of the Islamic Conference regarding the decision of the Israeli Government to resume excavation work beneath the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound (see annex).

It is requested that the present letter and its annex kindly be issued as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 18.

(*Signed*) Munir **Akram**

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Annex to the letter dated 17 October 2007 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement by the Organization of the Islamic Conference Group on the decision of the Israeli Government to resume excavation work beneath the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound

The Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) Group strongly condemns the decision of the Israeli Government to resume excavation work beneath the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound and the demolition of the historic road connecting Bab Al-Maghariba with the Holy Al-Aqsa Mosque Compound, which are seriously undermining its foundation and threatening it with collapse.

The OIC Group reaffirms its grave concern over the nature and objective of the Israeli archaeological work at the Haram El Sharif, which could alter the outstanding universal cultural value of the Haram El Sharif and the old city of Jerusalem.

The OIC Group believes that such actions on the part of Israel have a negative impact on the current efforts to create the appropriate political environment between the Palestinian and Israeli sides to revive the peace process and to resume the final status negotiations.

The OIC Group demands that Israel fully comply with its legal obligations according to international law, particularly the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949, which is applicable to all of the territories occupied by Israel since 1967, including East Jerusalem.

The OIC Group calls upon the international community, particularly the Security Council, to compel Israel, the occupying Power, to rescind its decision and to cease all such actions and measures aimed at the judaization of the Holy City of Al-Quds Al-Sharif and changing its legal status, character and demographic composition.